

# City Council Priorities and Action Plan

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## HICKORY CITY COUNCIL'S FY2011-2012 PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

On February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 the Hickory City Council revisited and reaffirmed its top ongoing policy priorities related to economic development. Each of these priorities will be continually implemented through specific projects and goals during the year and progress will be provided to City Council on a regular basis. They are as follows:

**Objective #1:** Invest in revitalization efforts for specific areas and existing buildings.

**Objective #2:** Invest in properties and partnerships to spur new development at targeted locations.

**Objective #3:** Position Hickory to become a major technology hub for the Southeastern United States.

In addition to these top 3 economic development priorities, every year the Hickory City Council adopts additional priorities and associated action plans that are derived from the annual Council-Staff Planning Retreat, the City's master plans, formal action taken by City Council throughout the year, and the City Manager's assessment of initiatives that need to be considered by City Council. These priorities and action plans are used during the fiscal year as a guide to ensure that City departments advocate the philosophy and goals defined by City Council for the City of Hickory.

Listed below are City Council's strategic priorities, management directives and major projects and initiatives to be undertaken by the City during the year. Each priority, directive and project lists goals to be accomplished and states action plans with measurable outcomes. As in the past, updates with progress on the Priorities and Action Plan will be provided to City Council on a regular basis.

### **Strategic Priority:            Economic Growth & Transportation**

#### **1. Promote Economic Development and Jobs**

- A. Market the remaining industrial sites at Fairgrove Business Park.
- B. Develop a marketing plan for City property near MDI in Caldwell County.
- C. Develop a marketing plan for City property at Cloninger Mill Road/Hwy 127.
- D. Partner in the development of a multi-jurisdictional business park. Identify & evaluate locations that either are current or could be in the Hickory City limits.
- E. Modify the "Operation No Vacancy" initiative to make it more strategic and targeted in nature.
- F. Pursue redevelopment opportunities for the S&W Chemical site and old Southern Desk site in West Hickory.

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- G. Promote redevelopment of obsolete manufacturing facilities by administering Brownfields Grants awarded to the City by USEPA.
  - H. Study broad initiatives which would facilitate aggressive redevelopment and demolition of obsolete and blighted manufacturing facilities.
  - I. Consider policies and recommendations by the Business Development Committee.
2. Implement Best Practices in Development Regulation
- A. Implement the recently updated Hickory by Choice and the City's Land Development Code.
  - B. Implement beautification techniques, such as street trees, plantings and stamped roadways, in strategic corridors and gateways of the City while consolidating costs with private partnerships.
  - C. Support and actively participate in the Land Use Development Board currently being sponsored by the Home Builders Association.
3. Improve Transportation
- A. Investigate options for increasing the paving and resurfacing budget.
  - B. Work with NCDOT and the MPO to develop projects benefiting Hickory.
  - C. Complete the traffic signal system upgrade project.
4. Leverage the City's Regional Utilities
- A. Pursue new utility extensions and regional agreements to enhance the utility system's economy of scale.
  - B. Use the City's strength in water and sewer services as an economic development tool.

## **Strategic Priority:        Natural Environment and Quality of Life**

1. Improve and Protect the Quality of Lake Hickory
- A. Monitor the compliance of Concord/Kannapolis in regards to the interbasin transfer agreement.
  - B. In meeting the EPA NPDES Phase II federal storm water regulations, continue implementing stormwater best practices and complying with stormwater regulations.
  - C. Complete construction on the NEWWTP Upgrade Project.
  - D. Finalize all phases of the Cripple Creek Sewer Line Replacement Project.
  - E. Continue planning for the construction for the Catawba WWTP upgrade.
  - F. Partner with other organizations (Reese Institute, Covekeepers, WaterWatch, Duke Power, Catawba River Study Committee) to promote policies and practices which protect the river, improve water quality and provide for water supply.

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G. Continue to promote “Your Catawba Use it Wisely” conservation program.

## 2. Improve Air Quality

- A. Monitor air quality attainment issues and support efforts to address those causes.
- B. Promote awareness of ozone action days.

## 3. Provide a Safe Community for Residents and Visitors

- A. Complete construction of the water, sewer, and street systems for the Green Park Neighborhood so that lots can be graded and made ready for housing construction.
- B. Pursue single-family home ownership opportunities in strategic locations to help stabilize distressed neighborhoods.
- C. Promote proactive public safety partnerships with citizens and neighborhood groups.
- D. Continue to engage the community in gang prevention.

## 4. Support Downtown Development and Activities

- A. Continue to support downtown festivals and activities with in-kind services.
- B. Continue the City’s partnership with the Downtown Development Association.
- C. Maintain public assets downtown to promote growth and create a convenient and beautiful experience.
- D. Consider highest and best use for vacant parcels in the downtown and support redevelopment of underutilized buildings.
- E. Evaluate the location of the Farmer’s Market on Union Square.

## 5. Support and Protect Neighborhoods

- A. Provide staff liaisons to recognized neighborhood associations.
- B. Respond effectively and timely to neighborhood request for City services including traffic calming, trash collection, policing, etc.
- C. Continue to market City properties for housing development.
- D. Pursue partnerships with non-profit housing groups to promote single-family home ownership, such as the partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

## 6. Offer High Quality Recreation and Library Opportunities

- A. Receive excellent customer rating for recreation programs.
- B. Receive excellent customer rating for library programs.

## **Strategic Priority:      Operational Excellence**

### 1. Provide Exceptional Customer Service and Communication

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- A. Provide a customer service training course to all coworkers.
- B. Each coworker's performance evaluation will reflect a focus on customer service.
- C. Utilize regular City Manager/Coworker meetings to enhance communication within the organization.

## 2. Invest in City Coworkers

- A. Provide internal training for supervisors.
- B. Promote and fund higher education opportunities which will benefit the coworker and the City.
- C. Recognize, formally and informally, coworkers' achievements.
- D. Continue to support the coworker Wellness Program

## 3. Constant Innovation in Delivery of Services

- A. Maintain the City's excellent standing for all services included in the NC Performance Measurement Project.

## **Strategic Priority: Vision and Leadership**

### 1. Support and Promote Higher Education Opportunities

- A. Work collaboratively with Lenoir-Rhyne University on initiatives and opportunities which would positively impact our community.
- B. Take a leadership role in expanding the role of the ASU Center as the foundation of a public university in Hickory.

### 2. Lead Regional Initiatives

- A. Continue to lead the region in protecting and promoting the Catawba River Basin.
- B. Be the lead agency on regional economic development issues to adequately represent the hub of the population and workforce in the Metro area.

### 3. Promote City Priorities in the 2011-12 Legislative Agenda to Federal and State Governments

- A. Actively participate in promoting the NC League of Municipalities legislative priorities.
- B. Develop and promote state and national legislative priorities that are in the specific interest of the City of Hickory.
- C. Work with Federal lobbying consultants to apply for grants and actively pursue appropriations at the federal level.

## **Strategic Priority: Communication and Marketing**

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1. Promote the City of Hickory to Our Residents
  - A. Provide a simple and effective means to communicate City Council's Priorities and Action Plan to citizens.
  - B. Make City Snippets interesting and provide timely items for residents.
  - C. Continue to offer and support interactive and innovative programs offered by the City, such as the Neighborhood College, and the Citizen's Police Academy.
2. Communicate Effectively with Customers about Delivery of Services.
  - A. Respond in a timely manner and inform citizens of results of "Action Requests."
  - B. Inform citizens about Hickory services, projects and awards.
  - C. Keep the city's website vibrant and informative.
  - D. Use print, radio, TV, internet and social media to communicate with our citizens.
  - E. Communicate effectively with organized neighborhood groups, boards and commissions and other partners.
3. Develop a Marketing and Recruitment Tool
  - A. Complete and implement the NorthStar Branding and Marketing Study to market Hickory online and to recruit business, young professionals and retirees to relocate to the Hickory area.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager